

Christus Deus.

THE
DIVINITY
OF
Our Saviour

Asserted and Vindicated, from the Exceptions of the Socinians and others.

In a SERMON preached at St. Peter's Hungate, in Norwich, upon the Festival of St. Philip and St. James, in the Year 1673.

By BERNARD SKELTON,
Sometime Vicar of Hinton,

LO N D O N ,

Printed for Jonathan Robinson at the Golden Lion in
St. Paul's Church-Yard, and Samuel Oliver Book-
seller in Norwich. MDCXCII.



Chuſſas Deſe.
THE
DIVINITY
OF
THE Supreme

Address and Addressing from the Preacher
one of the Seven and other

2955:06

In a Sermon Preached at St. Paul's
Church in London upon the Festival of
St. Paul and St. James, June Year 1733.

BY BERNARD SKELTON
Sometime Vicar of Faversham

TONDON

Printed for George Roper at the Golden Lion in
St. Paul's Church-Yard and sold by the same People.

1733. MDCCCLIII.

THE
BOOKSELLER
TO THE
READER.

THIS Discourse was long ago suppress'd by the Author, after it had been sent to the Press, and the Copy was lost. But a Gentleman who lived with the Transcriber, retriev'd a Copy, and has, at his own Charge and Trouble, exposed it to the World; the Author neither correcting nor reviewing it: so that whatever Errata's you meet with, all must not be laid upon him. This I remember he told me, that if he had put it out himself, he would have cut off a great many extravagant Enlargements, (so he termed them) which though they passed in the Pulpit, could not but be irksom to an intelligent Reader, who expects not Words, but Reason.

THE
BOOKSELLER
READER

THE Divinity of our Saviour

**Affirmed and Vindicated, from the Exceptions
of the Socinians and others.**

JOHN 14. part of the 9th Verse,

He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.

ST. Peter himself was not more eminent in the Church of God, than he whose Festivals we this day celebrate. If Cephas was a Pillar, so was James also: And in that pure and primitive Council, mentioned, *Acts 15.* he is so far from coming short of St. Peter in Place and Dignity, that the general Vogue will here give him the Priority: For after he had heard the Opinion of the whole Council, he, as chief of this Divine Convocation, briefly rehearseth their several Opinions, and lastly gives his definitive and determinative Sentence, *That we trouble not them, who from among the Gentiles are turned to God.* And though *Rome* hath raised her proud Hills above the Clouds, and stretched forth her Neck beyond her Sister-Churches; yet we know that *Jerusalem* was the Mother of us all: There the Gospel was first planted; from thence it was dispersed through the World: and

B

St.

St. James was the first Bishop thereof, if we may believe *Baronius*. And why then may not St. James's Successors challenge Supremacy, as well as St. Peter's, since *Jerusalem* was the Mother-Church? But if St. Peter's Confession gave him this Prerogative, St. Philip will step in here, and say, he made it before him: for in *John* 1. 43. he tells *Nathanael*, *We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write: Which is nothing else but a Periphialis of the Messiah*, and is so interpreted by *Nathanael* also, *ver. 49. Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel*.

But not to make the Apostles contend or jostle for Superiority, since they had learn'd of their Master, that *he that would be greatest, must be their Minister, and he that would be chiefest, must be Servant to all*; it is most certain that these our Apostles were in the number of those Stones which were the Foundation of the New and Heavenly *Jerusalem*, the City of God. Neither in their way were they inservient to any in the Work of the Ministry, and the promulgating the *Facetia* of the *Gospel*. For St. James residing at *Jerusalem*, hath, as well as St. Paul, the care of all the Churches, and by his *Catholick Epistle*, confounds Heresy, confirms the Brethren, advances the miraculous Power of Prayer, particularly that by the Elders of the Church, confutes the *Sophistis*, proves that *Faith without Works, is no better than the Faith of Devils*, which believe and tremble, that without Works it is dead. And the Doctrine thereof hath been long since buried, till of late Years it revived, and gained a *Resurrection at Geneva*.

St. Philip preached the *Gospel* in *Bythin*, and found more Humanity among those Barbarians, than with those that stiled themselves *Christians*: For after twenty

ry Years Travel in that large and barbarous Country, where, contrary to expectation, both himself and Doc-
trine found a most welcome Reception, (so easily can the meek Temper of the Gospel triumph over savage
Natures, and Giant-like Spirits) he returned to Antioch,
a City of Syria, where he encounters and con-
futes the *Ebionites*, those *Saxons*, who denied the Di-
vinity of our Saviour; and there, say some, he found
a Tomb, others a Martyrdom. So early had Her-
etics learned, as well as Jews, to overwhelm with
Stones, whom they could not gainsay by Scripture.
If we look into the Gospel, we shall find him, as soon
as he was made an Apostle, making others Disciples,
bringing *Nathanael*, the true Israelite, to the King of
Israel; obliging the very Gentiles, making Greeks do
Homage to the King of the Jews; and here in this Go-
spel, whereof my Text is a part, earnestly interesting
to be instructed in that Doctrine, for which he was
content to die.

Show me, saith he, the Father, and it sufficeth. And
Jesus saith unto him, *Have I been so long time with you,
and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* *He that hath
seen me, hath seen the Father.*

I shall not trouble you with any subtle and accurate
Division of the Words; but from this great Truth here
asserted by our Saviour, I shall raise this one Observa-
tion or Doctrine, which is the natural Consequence of
the Words, *That Christ is one in Essence with the Father;*
he is the most High God, the God of *Israel*. For if
this be true which our Saviour asserts, that *whoever
seeth him, seeth the Father;* and who dare doubt it,
since it's Truth it self that speaks it; we must rational-
ly conclude, either that he is the Father, which is de-
nied by all, or else that the Father and he have one and
the

the same Divine Essence. For whether we make use of rational, spiritual or corporal Opticks ; whether this Vision be made by the Eye of the Understanding, and we interpret the Words, *He that knows me, knows the Father* ; or else by the Eye of Faith, and so, *He that believes in me, believes in the Father* ; or we take the Words properly, and by seeing is meant the Action of our corporal and sensitive Organ ; the result will be the same, the Consequence not different. For if it be true, that whosoever knows or believes Christ, knows the Father, the Consequence will be, what our Saviour affirms, *John 10. 30. That he and the Father are one.*

But to these object *Socinus* and the Racovian Catechism, first, That these Words can by no means be applied to the Divine Essence, which, say we as well as they, is invisible and inaccessible to the most piercing Eye of poor Mortality, since the Angels themselves are forc'd to vail their Faces. But this is so sensles a shift, that they must be blind indeed, who cannot see how to answer it : For who ever was so quick-sighted yet, as to spy the Essences of Things ? *Essentia rerum non incurrit in sensus.* Who ever look'd upon a Man, and spied his Soul, that Bird of Paradise, perking upon a little Glandule in the midst of the Brain, and from thence giving its imperious Dictates to every Member of the Body ? Or else, what Tube or Spectacles did he use, to see the Soul diffused through the whole, and be wholly in the whole, and yet wholly in every part thereof ? Now though when we look on a Man, we cannot see his Essence, and yet by his Discourse and Reason, we see and know he hath the Essence of a Man : so whosoever looks on Christ, though the Divine Essence be invisible ; yet since he that sees him, sees the Father, must necessarily acknowledg, that he hath

hath the Essence of the Father, he is one with the Father, he is the most High God, the God of *Israel*.

But say the Objectors, If this be granted, yet the Consequence you make is altogether illogical; for if it be true, that he who sees Christ, sees the Father, it naturally follows, that Christ is the Father, and not, as you say, that he is one in Essence with the Father. And so, contrary to your own Principles, you confound the Persons, and make the Son the Father, and the Father the Son, which is a Contradiction, and altogether impossible.

To this I answer, that the word *Father* in the Scripture is taken either essentially and absolutely for God, or the Divine Nature; or else personally and respectively in reference to the other Persons of the sacred Trinity. An Example of the latter we have in the Commission of Baptism; *Go, and disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. And again, *There are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. And an Example of the former we have in those Words of the Jews, *We have one Father, even God*: And of the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 9. 6. *His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father*. Now either the Prophet meant he should be called as he wasto be, and then the Everlasting Father must signify essentially the Eternal God; or else he should not be what he foretold he should be called: And so there is here no Prerogative of the Messiah foretold, but the Prophecy is a mere Scoff, and an ironical Mock of him who was to be the Desire of all Nations. And the meaning is, he should be called the wonderful Counsellor, but he shall be only one of no Parts, no Wit, Counsellor Advice: He shall be called

The

The mighty God, but shall be only *μαλακός ἄνδρος*, a poor, weak, silly Man : He shall be called, *The Everlasting Father*, but shall be the most despicable amongst the Sons of Men. Now since this Interpretation is contrary to the Scope of the Prophet, and the Tenour of the whole Scripture, and it's a Contradiction that in one and the same Respect the Father should be the Son, and the Son should be the Father ; we must conclude that the word *Father* in this Prophecy must be taken essentially for God, or the Divine Nature. And if here and in several other Places of Scripture, (which my time will not now give me leave to enumerate) the word *Father* is so taken, why not in this Speech of our Saviour's? which will make the Sense clear and obvious to the meanest Understanding, *He that seeth me, seeth the Father*, that is, feeth God, him who hath the Divine Nature ; or else, which amounts to the same, is one in Essence with the Father.

There is yet an Interpretation more, which is the learned *Hammond's*, in his Paraphrase on the New Testament, where he saith, The Son is said to be the Image of his Father, and *whoever seeth the Son, seeth the Father*, alluding to the Expression of the Apostle, where Christ is said to be the *Brightness of his Father's Glory, the express Image of his Person*. But this is so far from helping our Adversaries, that indeed it doth both confute and confound them : For though, as they say truly, the Image, and that it represents, cannot be the same ; yet the Son cannot be said to be the Image of his Person, without he have one and the same Divine Nature and Essence : For every Image either expresseth the outward Lineaments and Proportions of the thing it represents, as a Picture, Statue and Impression ; or else together with the outward Lineaments, the

the Gesture and Motion of the thing it represents, as a Mirrour or Looking-glass. Thus Man as he was created in Holiness, and had Power given him over the Creatures, did represent, or was the Image of God in the Imitation of the Divine Operations, or in the Exercise of his Power, Justice and Mercy: or else it expresseth the Nature, Genius, Person, and internal Form of that whereof it is the Image. Thus the Son of Man cannot be the natural Image of his Father, unless he hath one and the same specifical Nature with his Father, and is like him in the Qualities and Endowments of the Soul: *Non progenerat Aquila Columbum*; 'tis a Man only that begetteth a Man; 'tis a Man, not a Horse or a Lion, can be the express Image of the Person of a Man. Thus nothing can be the express Image of Infinity, but what is infinite: And the Son of God, the eternal Son of an eternal Father, *God of God, Light of Light*, is the express Image of his Father's Person: As he hath one and the same not specifical, for the Divine Nature is indivisible, and can be but one (since it is impossible there should be more than one infinite most perfect Essence) but individual Divine Nature and Perfections. And so the Words, according to this Interpretation, amount to thus much, that he that feeth Christ who is the express Image of his Father's Person, feeth him who cannot but be of the same Nature and Divine Essence: And so the Consequence is yet more clear and evident, that Christ is one with the Father, that he is the most High God, the God of *Israel*.

The Words being thus cleared, if there were no other Place of Scripture to prove this great Truth, yet from this alone we have sufficient Ground to believe it. But the Divinity of the Blessed Jesus is almost in every Para.

Paragraph, writ in such large and evident Characters, that he that runs may read it: Would you see it written by a Sun-Beam? What can be more bright and illustrious, than that Saying of St. Paul to *Timothy*? 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Without Controversy great is the Mystery of Godliness: God was manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.* Here the word *God* is the Subject of six Propositions together, and therefore according to the Rule laid down by the Socinians, signifieth the supream Power and Majesty, excluding all others from that Deity. Now that that Text is meant of our Saviour, and not of the Will of God revealed by frail mortal Man, and gloriously received on Earth, as they would interpret the Place, is clear, without they make the Scripture speak Contradictions; and so to be taken up into Glory, be to be received gloriously on Earth; and then up is down; above, below; Earth, Heaven.

Besides, it is the same Word which is used by the Septuagint for the Assumption of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, and in the New Testament for the Ascension of our Saviour; *Mark 16. 19. Acts 1. 2. Acts 1. 11, 22.* Wherefore this being the constant Notion of the Word, we must either learn a Language which the Scriptures know not, and the Holy Ghost never use; or else according to their own Rule, Jesus must be this most High God manifested in the Flesh. Would you read this Doctrine engraven by the Point of a Diamond? Consult St. John's first Epistle, *chap. 5. ver. 20.* *We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Understanding to know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: This is he true God, and eternal Life.*

To

To this our Adversaries object only, That there is a Possibility the last Words in Grammatical Construction may be referred to the Father. But because the Son is the immediate Antecedent, to which the Relative can properly be referred, 2. The Son is here chiefly treated on, which is the Rule they give for interpreting such Places of Scripture. And, 3. since the Reason rendered, why we are in the true God, is, because we are in the Son, *viz.* because the Son is the true God. And, 4. in St. John, the constant Title of our Saviour is Eternal Life. Since, I say, all these Reasons are in the Text it self, why the Title of the true God should be attributed to the Son, and not here referred to the Father, who indeed is spoken of in the Text but at a distance, I cannot but conclude that our Saviour is the True God, and Eternal Life, the most High God, the God of *Israel*.

If we look into the Old Testament, we shall find many Places which directly speak of the God of *Israel*, which are interpreted by the Apostles in the New, to be meant of none but Christ. If David say, *The Israelites lusted in the Wilderness, and tempted God in the Desert*: and Moses describes the History thereof, Numb. 21. 5, 6. and tells us, *God sent fiery Serpents to destroy them*: St. Paul will tell us, *this God was Christ*; 1 Cor. 10. 9. *Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of fiery Serpents*. What indeed would these Men have, if we must not believe such Places and palpable Truths as these are? Will they make both us and themselves Idolaters? And yet they do no otherwise, who give the Honour and Worship to the Creature, which is due only to the Creator: for (besides that God saith, he will not give his Honour to another) what I pray you is Religious Worship, but

that Homage, Faith and Obedience, which ought to be paid, and is really due from the Creature to the great Creator? Now as it is impossible that God can be otherwise than the first Cause and Creator of all things, and so cannot devest himself of that Sovereignty which he hath over the Creature; so it is equally impossible that another should have the same Homage, Honour and Religious Worship with the most High God, without Idolatry, (and yet we are bound to honour the Son as we honour the Father) unless he be likewise the first Cause, the great Creator; which for a Creature to be, implies a Contradiction. Since then the Reason of the Law, *viz.* our Obligation to worship God upon the Account of Creation, always continues; why not the Law it self, which commands, *Thou shalt worship God alone, and him only shalt thou serve?* If they say their Worship of Christ is subordinate, and directed through Christ to God the Father; why then do they call the Romanists Idolaters? Why do they not shake Hands with *Bellarmino*, and kiss the Pope's Toe, who allows no other Worship to the Virgin *Mary*, and the rest of the Saints, than they do to Christ, whom they make altogether a Creature? Neither will their Simily of a King and his Son, or a Favourite, do here; for a King may devest himself of his Royal Authority: but it is otherwise with God, he cannot but be the first Cause of all things, and therefore the Creature will be always bound to worship him as such. Now as it's contrary to the Justice and Truth of God to command us to worship him for the first Cause, for the Creator, who is but a mere Creature: So since we are obliged by Scripture to pay the same Homage, Faith and Obedience to the Son as to the Father, to honour the Son as we honour the Father; we must conclude that the

Son,

Son, as well as the Father, is the first Cause, the great Creator, the most High God, the God of *Israel*.

But I will not stand any longer to prove the Sun gives Light. Our Saviour himself who is ὁ λόγος, the highest Reason, proves the Truth of this Doctrine in this very Gospel appointed for this Day, in the Verses immediately following the Text; from the In-dwelling of the Father and the Son: the Greeks call it περιβολή; the Latines, *Circumincepsio*; but I know not well how to render it. Our Saviour faith, *Because I am in the Father, and the Father in me*; which is fully expressed, by the Apostle; *For in him, saith he, dwells the Fulness of the Godhead bodily.*

The second Argument is drawn from his Words or Doctrine: *The Words, saith he, that I speak, I speak not of my self, but the Father that dwelleth in me.* The Prophets of old spake as they were moved and directed by God; but here it is God himself that speaks. *God who at sundry times and in divers Manners spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last Days, saith the Divine Author to the Hebrews, spoken unto us by his Son, his natural Son:* The Word being here taken emphatically, as appears by the Opposition here made to the Prophets, who are in Scripture-Language stiled the Children or Sons of God. Never Man spake as he spake, by his Adversaries own Confession; *Vox non hominem sonat, est Deus certè:* What was blasphemously ascribed to *Herod*, is most certainly true; here it is the *Voice of God, and not of Man.*

The third Argument is taken from his Works and Miracles; *He, the Father, saith Christ, doth the Works, believe me; ver. 11. For the very Works sake they declare my infinite Virtue, and demonstrate my Omnipotency.* The ruffling and roaring Winds, the boisterous Waves

obey his Voice, and the Seas acknowledg the Lord High Admiral of the Ocean, to be aboard : The Fish bring Silver in their Mouths to do Homage, and pay their Quit-Rents to their suprem Lord and Maker : The Loaves and Fishes multiply, as receiving another Nature from the God of Nature, and the Author of all Fecundity : Diseases fly, and the Devils tremble at his Command, and are forced to confess, what the Socinians deny, that Jesus is the Holy One, the most High God, the God of *Israel*.

Neither will the Objection which they make from the 14th Verse of this Chapter, where Christ saith, *He that believeth on him, shall do greater Works than he doth,* signify any thing ; for the Words answer themselves : It is by his Power and Authority they are done, by believing on him who is one in Essence with the Father ; for *whosoever believeth on him, believeth on the Father.* Jesus saith unto him, *Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip ? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.*

But, faith carnal Reason, this is an hard Saying, who can bear it ? What *Hocus-Pocus* Tricks have we here to make two one, and one two ? What *Legerde-main* Divinity ? What religious Non-sense is this ? Can the Father be the Son, and the Son the Father ? If the Son have the same Essence with the Father, how then can they differ ? Can any thing differ from its own Essence ? Can it differ from its self ? Sure these are the Dreams of some superstitious Zealots, whose Devotion makes them with the Athenians, build Altars, *avens* etc, to the *Unknown God*.

The most High God, who is the highest Reason, will not oblige his Creature to believe things contrary to Reason, and make us do Violence to our own natural Faculties.

The

The old Jews thought not of such a Plurality of Persons in one Divine Essence; the Old Testament nowhere mentioneth it: And if we consult the New, we shall find Christ's Divinity to be by Donation, not by Eternal Generation; that God highly exalted him, and gave him a Name above every Name: but this was the Reward of an excellent Virtue, of an incomparable Submission to the Death of the Cross, and an unerring Obedience; nothing here of an Existence and Divinity before he was born of the Virgin. 'Tis true indeed, he might be called the Son of God, because the Virgin was over-shadowed by the Power of the most High; but who ever dream'd, the Antient of Days was con-infantiated, and entred into the Womb of a Woman? If this be true, how could the Father be greater than he? Can any thing be greater than it self? Why doth Christ acknowledg that all the Power he hath, was given him of the Father; that he can do nothing of himself; that he came not of himself, nor to do his own Will, or to seek his own Glory? If he be the most High God, how comes it to pass that he is not omniscient, that he knows not the Day of Judgment, that he cannot dispose of Places in Heaven, that he denies himself to be good, that he affirms the Father to be the only true God? How is it, that he received Commands from God, to be sent into the World? What makes him to pray? What, did he put up his Petitions to himself? If he be God, how could he die, and be raised again by the Power of his Father? And lastly, why doth he give this as the only Reason why he is said to be the Son of God, because he was sanctified by the Father, and sent into the World? Thus you see these *Zamzummims* of Reason would despoil the *λόγος*, the highest Reason of his Divinity. But

as *Elija* said to his Servant; *There be more with us than with them*; and if that one, who is more than all, be for us; if the *Chariot and Horsemen of Israel* be on our side, let *Socinus* and his Followers do what they can, I doubt not but we shall prevail against them.

The time allotted for this Exercise, will not give me leave to answer distinctly to every one of these Arguments. I will therefore reduce them summarily into Heads and Classes; and by applying an Answer to each Head, let you see easily how you may give a distinct Solution to every Argument in particular.

First then, saith the Objector, it is against Reason. To this I answer, That it may be above Reason, as to the manner of explaining it; but that it is contrary to right Reason, I deny; for Reason, that Divine Candle of the Lord, hath discovered the necessity of this Doctrine to her chiefest Adorers. To pass by *Trismegistus* and others, whose Writings are suspected; what made *Plato* in his fourth Book of Laws, say, that God should be the Rule and Measure of all things, principally if any where he took upon him the Nature of a Man? Why did *Aristotle* say, it was necessary the Gods immortal should vest themselves with Humanity, to destroy the Errors were crept into the World? *Tully* saith, The time will come, when there shall be but one common Lord and Master, God himself, who shall reign upon the Earth. Besides, the Platonists plainly assert in their Writings, that there are three Hypostases or Persons in the Deity. Either these Men found out this by the Light of Nature, and then how can it be contrary to Reason? or else they had it by Tradition from the Jews, and then it seems the old Jews understood it. And certainly it is the Doctrine of the Old Testament as well as the New.

But

But Reason shews the necessity of this Doctrine from one of her first Maxims or Principles : Every Good, faith she, the more communicative it is, the better it is: if God then be infinitely good, he must be infinitely communicable, which can no otherwise be, but by Communication of the Divine Essence, which is only infinitely good: since the Creatures neither separately nor conjunctly, can any way be said to be so. Thus Reason speaks a necessity of this Doctrine. Are not the Communicator and the Communicated distinct Persons? Yet there can be but one individual, though communicable Divine Essence, since there can be but one infinitely Good and Perfect, as Reason dictates, and we all confess.

But to this they object, That the Son, as infinitely Good, must also be infinitely Communicable, and so *in infinitum*. To this I answer, That the Act of Generation or Communication, is infinite and eternal, and the Essence communicated is infinite; how then can there be more than one infinite and eternal Act of Generation? Where shall ye next begin, since this can never be at an end? But if you urge the Procession of the Holy Ghost; I answer, That every thing which is begotten proceedeth; but not every thing that proceedeth is begotten. *Eve* was produced and came forth of *Adam*; and yet was not generated by him: So the Procession of the Holy Ghost cannot prejudice the eternal Generation of the same. For though the Essence be the same which is communicated from the Father to the Son, and from the Father and Son to the Holy Ghost; yet there is a difference in the Communication, the Word being God by Generation, the Holy Ghost by Procession. So that though there cannot be more than one infinite and eternal Act *in uno genere*, in its kind; by way

of Understanding, which in spiritual Beings is Conception or Generation; so it's no contradiction, that there be an infinite Act of the Will too, by way of infinite Love or Volition, which is Procession.

But, saith the Objector, if it be necessary that an infinite Good be infinitely communicable, how can these two be one? as it is indeed the usual Method of our Adversaries to pose us with the manner of the Existence of a Plurality of Persons in one Divine Essence. But who knows not, that as to argue from the Existence to the manner of existing, is no Consequence? so to argue we know not the manner of it, therefore it is not, is very bad Logick. We know not how the Loadstone drills and draws the Iron into its close Embraces; but we are sure it is so. The Wind we know blows; but whence it comes, and whither it goes, we are ignorant. In these, and a thousand things more, is Reason pos'd in Naturals, much more in Supernaturals: So that it is a sufficient Answer to say, Scripture and Reason tell us it is so; but how it is so, we know not: Neither do we desire to know, lest with the Bethlehemites we smart for our peeping into the Ark of the Lord. But we are not altogether in the dark as to this neither: There is something in Nature, (which tho there be no proportion between finite and infinite) may yet at the least shadow out something not altogether unlike this Plurality of Persons in one Essence: If we lift up our Eyes towards Heaven, and look upon the Sun, we cannot but perceive some Glimmerings of this great Truth in that beautiful and glorious Body: Is it not the Fountain and Cause of natural Light? Was it ever destitute of this pleasing Act of Generation? Did it not, ever since it was a Sun, send forth these bright and joyful Emanations? Thus the Son of God

is

is the Brightnes of his Father's Glory, the eternal Son of an eternal Father. Are not the Sun and its darling Light distinct Suppostes? Do they not differ as Cause and Effect, Begetter and Begotten? It is a poor shift here to say, that Light is a Quality; for Reason in the best of Authors, *Democritus*, *Epicurus*, and generally in all the modern Philosophers, speaks the contrary. In short, the Sun naturally and necessarily produceth Light. Thus God, who is the most free Agent in this great Act of Generation, acts *ex necessitate Naturae*, naturally, which is the highest Perfection, as I said before; because being infinitely Good, he is infinitely Communicable. Now that the Sun and Light, which, as Cause and Effect, Begetter and Begotten, have one and the same individual Essence, appears from the tacit Consent of all Men I ever met with: for if nothing interposeth between the Rays of the Sun and them, they will say, they are in the Sun: And it is true, for the Sun is Light, and Light is the Sun; they are one in Essence, tho' distinct as Cause and Effect. I could enlarge much upon this Similitude, and make it clearer than the Sun it self. But Time calls me to answer their other way of arguing; which is by Scripture, wherein I will be as concise as may be, for I fear I have already tired your Patience.

First, say our Adversaries, his Divinity was by Donation, as appears from *Phil. 2. 9*. And again, the Father is called the Head, nay the God of Christ.

I answer; All this is in respect of his humane Nature, as we may see in the Chapter cited, *Phil. 2.* for he that was in the Form of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, took upon him the Form of a Servant, submitting to the Death of the Cross, the Punishment of Slaves and Servants. The

Exaltation therefore of the Humane Nature, as a Reward of his Death and Suffering, could be no prejudice to his Divinity, which the Apostle asserts fully in the foregoing Verses.

But, saith the Objector, how can the Son be the Father? To do nothing of himself, not to come of himself, or seek his own Glory, are Imperfections not suitable to the Divine Nature. I answer; What he calls Imperfections, are the greatest Perfections: for since the Divine Nature can be but one Christ, if he be the proper natural Son of God, as he is said to be in Scripture, must have the same individual Essence with the Father, and so consequently, what the Jews affirmed for Blasphemy, the most High God: and he doth nothing of himself, because the Father that dwelleth in him, worketh together with him. *Opera Dei ad extra sunt indivisa.*

The third sort of Objections are from those Scriptures which deny some Perfections to belong to Christ, in some certain Respect: But our Adversaries deny them absolutely, as not to know the Day of Judgment, and the like.

The fourth Objection is, when they attribute some Imperfection to Christ absolutely, which is spoken of him in Scripture only in some certain Respect, as to be Man, to Die, to Pray, to be Raised again; that the Father is greater than he, and the like; all which are said of him only in respect of his Humanity.

Lastly, saith the Objector, Christ gives this as the only Reason why he is said to be God, because he was sanctified, and sent into the World. And here I beg your leave to be more copious; and that I may not seem to derogate, or take any thing from the strength of the Argument, I will repeat the very Words of their Authors,

thors, as they are set down in the Racovian Catechism, pag. 19. Having premised, that the word *God* is taken two ways in Scripture; first, for the most High; secondly, for him who hath some sublime Dominion under him; they add, that in the latter Signification, the Word of God is in certain Places dignified with the Title of God. And this we prove, saith the Racovian Catechism, from the very Words of the Son himself, John 10. 35. *If ye call them Gods to whom the Word of God comes, and the Scripture cannot be broken: Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the World, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?* By this Speech Christ doth clearly intimate both that the word *God* is sometimes attributed in Scripture to them who are far inferiour to that one God; as also that he called himself the Son of God for no other reason, than because he had been sanctified by the Father, and sent into the World.

To this I answer, 1st, That I admit the distinction; but that the word *God* is applied to Christ only, in the latter Signification, is false, as I have before proved: And to say only, as they do, that in certain Places of Scripture, the Word, when attributed to Christ, is taken, in the latter Signification, for him that hath some derivative Power from the most High God, makes nothing against us: for in certain other Places of Scripture it is attributed to Christ, in the former Signification, for the God of Gods, or the most High God. If indeed they had said, that in every Place of Scripture, where the word *God* is applied to Christ, it is taken only for him who is inferiour to the Supreme God, they had spoke to the purpose. And if this be their

Meaning, which I think it is, yet what they offer for Proof, is altogether illogical and non-egent: For who that ever pretended to Reason, ever went about to prove an universal Affirmative by one Particular? and yet they do no otherwise here, for thus they argue; Christ calls himself the Son of God, and so consequently a God in one Place of Scripture, *viz. John 10. 36.* wherein the word *God* is used in the latter Signification for him that hath some derivative Power from the most High God, and for no greater reason, than because he is sanctified, and sent into the World; therefore in every Place of Scripture, where the word *God* is ascribed to Christ, it must be so taken, and for the same reason. Now help me Logicks, if this be sound Reasoning, and good Argumentation! The King of *England* is called and acknowledged King of *France* by us here in *England*; therefore he is so in *France, Spain, Italy*, and all the World over. Who is so dim-sighted, as not to perceive this egregious *non-sequitur*? But suppose, what cannot be granted, that he called himself God for that reason, yet it is not expressed, that he calls himself so for no greater; he might declare this, and conceal others at this time, when the Jews were about to stone him, for ought our Adversaries can say to the contrary. Nay, what if he doth not at all alledg this Reason for his calling of himself God? which indeed he doth not, as will appear from the consideration of the Context. The Jews, *ver. 34.* accuse him of Blasphemy, and because, *thou being a Man, makest thy self a God.* Our Saviour answers to this Accusation, *The Scripture calls them Gods to whom the Word of God came;* therefore if I am sanctified or set apart by the Father, and sent into the World

World to preach this Word, I am na Blasphemer, though I call my self God. It is one thing to say, I call my self God, because the Father hath sanctified me and sent me into the World; and another to say, If I call my self God, for that Reason I am no Blasphemer: for Christ doth not here go about to shew how he is said to be God; but to answer their Accusation, and prove that he was no Blasphemer, because he said he was the Son of God. So that the Sense of the Words is clearly this, I am no Blasphemer by calling my self God, since being sanctified by the Father, I speake nothing contrary to Scripture, which calls them Gods to whom the Word of God came.

And now I hope I have brought to the ground this high and mighty Objection, having shewn first, that the word *God* (which is supposed, not granted) be attributed to Christ in the latter Signification, for him that hath some derivative Power from the most High God; yet in certain other Places of Scripture (when attributed to him) it is taken for the God of Gods, or the most High God.

2dly, If they mean (what is false) that in every Place of Scripture where the word *God* is given to our Saviour, it is taken only for him, who hath some derivative Power from the most High God; yet their Argument is not good, because it concludes from one sole Particular, an universal Affirmative.

3dly, Because if he does give his Sanctification and Mission as a Reason of his Deity; yet it cannot be said he called himself God for no greater Reason, since it is not

not so expressed in the Text, and he might declare this, and conceal others at this time, when the Jews were about to stone him, *His Hour*, as he saith elsewhere, *being not then come*.

4thly, and lastly; He doth not say, he calls himself God for that Reason, but saith only that if he call himself God, for that Reason, he is no Blasphemer; his Design being not to shew how he was God, but to prove he was no Blasphemer. So that I think now we may safely enough conclude, that *he that sees the Son, seeth the Father*; that Jesus is one in Essence with the Father, that *he is the most High God, the God of Israel*.

There are yet two Difficulties, the Independency of Christ, and the Union of the Divine and Humane Nature; both which I will briefly speak to, and so conclude.

First then, say the Socinians, Christ is said in Scripture to be the Son of God, and therefore (since the Divine Essence, which is infinite and most perfect, cannot be multiplied without a Contradiction) Christ depends on the Father as to his Essence, which is an Imperfection not suitable to the most High God. In short, say they, Christ is dependent, therefore not the most High God.

To this I answer, 1. That nothing can be said to depend upon another as to his Essence, but what is in time after that which causeth it; 2. That hath an Essence individually distinct from it; 3. Which is contingent

tingent as to its Essence, or is in the Power of another to be, or not be. But nothing of this can be said of Christ; for the Father and the Son are co-eternal, neither before or after other; the Son hath not an Essence distinct from the Father; neither is the Son of God contingent as to his Essence: It is not in the Power of the Father, that he be, or not be, since the Father naturally and necessarily begetteth the Son. In a word, they have both the same Essence, and how the same can be said to depend upon it self, is a manner of speaking I am not acquainted with, and know not how to apprehend. Christ saith, *Rev. 1. I am the first and the last*; which Elogy the God of *Israel*, the most High God, appropriates to himself, *Isa. 48. 12*. Now I would fain know how the first Being can be said to depend upon another for its Being. If our Adversaries say, as they do, that these Words are not to be understood absolutely, but in reference to the Gospel or Way of Salvation; then they contradict their own Principles, and take away the Difference between the first and second Cause. They make the Son the first Cause, and yet they say the Father is the first or prime Author of Salvation; and so in reference to Salvation there is a first before a first, which implies a Contradiction. I conclude therefore, that these words are to be understood of Christ absolutely, *viz.* that he is the first, being the Cause of all things, that he is *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and End, the first and the last*; which denotes not only his Eternity, but likewise his Independency; For how can that which is before all things, be said to depend on any thing?

As to the Union of the Divine and Humane Nature
into

into one Person, our Adversaries thus argue; It's impossible that two endued with opposite Properties, should combine into one Person: Or, that two Natures, each whereof is apt to constitute a several Person, should be united into one Person.

I answer, First, that is neither strange, impossible, nor, as our Adversaries say, repugnant to sound Reason, that two Substances, endued with opposite Properties, should combine into one Person: for the Soul is immortal, and the Body mortal; yet these do so combine that they constitute one Person. Again, the Soul is not only apt to constitute, but is really a Person, according to the Platonist, (if a Person be a singular Substance endued with Reason) before its Entrance into the Body; for if each Soul did subsist by it self many thousand Years before its Body, it could not be said to be part of a Man before it was united to the Body. And therefore a Nature which is not only apt, but really constitutes a Person, may be united to another Nature, as that both shall constitute one Person. There is no Necessity therefore in the Hypostatical Union, that there should be two Persons, and so consequently two Christs; for as the reasonable Soul and Flesh is one Man, so God and Man is one Christ.

And it is false, what our Adversaries say, that the Similitude holds not, because according to us Christ is both God and Man; but Soul and Body are so conjoined, that a Man is neither Soul nor Body, for he is both. Thus the Scripture, speaking of Men and Women, says, *So many Souls were added to the Faith*: And the common Speech is thus, is there any Body, or there is

is no Body, meaning none of Mankind in such or such a Place. But if they will not, the Platonists Pre-existence of Souls, which I, as Answerer, am not obliged to prove, but they to disprove; yet according to the common Opinion, that two Persons cannot combine, there is no Fear there should be two Persons in Christ; for nothing can be said to be a Person, (as your own Definition of a Person intimates by the word Individual) unless it actually exist: But the humane Nature of Christ never existed, but in the second Person of the Trinity. It is true if the humane Nature had been individuated, and subsisted of it self, before it was united to the second Person of the Trinity, there might have been some Shew of an Objection; but this they know is not admitted. How then can Christ be said to be more than one Person, since the Son of Man subsists only in the Person of the Son of God? What hinders then that a Person may be so united to another Person, which if it should subsist of it self, would be a Person, that they both be one only Person, since the one subsists in the other, and hath no proper Subsistence of its own? But it will be sufficient in short to say, *Rem scimus, Modum nescimus*; the thing we know, the manner we know not: And it is no good Consequence, as I said before, to argue, you know not the manner, you know not how the thing is, therefore it is not.

Let us therefore admire and adōre that infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God, which hath revealed so much of that great Mystery to Mankind, which the Prophets foretold, and the Angels themselves desired to peep into, *viz. God manifested in the Flesh*; whereby

he that sees Christ, feeth the Father, sees the invisible God, and approacheth to that Light which is inaccessible. Would you then see the Father? Is your Soul athirst for the living God? Do you breath and pant after eternal Life? Why then do you any longer gaze and gape after Vanity? Look upon Jesus, there is no seeing the Father, but by the Son: View him in his Word, view him in his Works; *in him dwelleth the Fullness of the Godhead bodily*: He only can shew you the Father; *He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; he only can give you the Ante-pasts of Eternity, and whilst you are here upon Earth, make you touch Heaven with a Finger: And though now, as the Apostle saith, *you can see him but as through a Glass, darkly*; yet the time will come when you shall see him as he is, *Face to Face*, encircled with all his Rays of Glory. Again, would you see the Father? Doth the Horror of your Sins affright you, and the infinite Justice of an angry God terrify you? Have you been bitten by the fiery Serpent, and would you see the Bowels of Mercy, and the tender Compassions of a Father? Look upon Jesus, view him on the Cross; see how he stretcheth forth his Arms to receive thee. How canst thou now chuse but cry out with the Apostle, *o pax*, *O the Depth and Length and Breadth of the Love of God in Christ Jesus!* Behold him bleeding, there's Balsam in his Blood. The Serpent upon the Pole of the Cross can cure all the venomous Stings of Satan, that red Dragon, that fiery Serpent. Let not the infinite Justice of God any longer terrify you: He that feeth Jesus, feeth also the Father of Mercies, the God of Comfort and all Consolations. As there was infinite Punishment due, so there is an infinite Satisfaction made; for he that sacrificed

crified himself for us, was both God and Man. *By the Blood of God, faith the Apostle, we are redeemed;* and Jesus is this God, for he is, as the Apostle speaks, Rom. 9. 5. *over all, God blessed for evermore. Amen.*

To him therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as most due is, all Honour, Glory, Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, both now and evermore. *Amen.*

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

F I N I S.